



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Mayor awards grants to small businesses in Southeast Seattle, Owners reinvesting in their community through the City's facade program

SEATTLE – Together with Southeast Seattle community leaders and business owners, Mayor Greg Nickels today presented certificates to 16 businesses and property owners for enhancing storefronts in several neighborhoods, including Beacon Hill, Brighton/Dunlap, Columbia City, along Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Rainier Beach.

“The City is investing in the Rainier Valley to make sure that the local businesses and residents benefit from the large projects of Sound Transit and the Seattle Housing Authority,” said Mayor Nickels. “The City’s façade program will help these small businesses grow and continue to be a backbone of our neighborhoods.”

Ten of the 16 projects are completed or have approved budgets, totaling over \$60,000 of City investment.

The Office of Economic Development (OED)’s façade improvement program is designed to stimulate investment in lower income neighborhoods, attract positive attention to businesses and spur other businesses to undertake needed improvements. Some of today’s grant recipients have already completed their façade improvements, and others, like the Rainier Family Dentistry, are just starting their project.

“We’ve been in this neighborhood a long time, and we feel it’s important to re-invest and show other businesses that improving your storefront can make a difference in the neighborhood and to your clients,” said Dr. Pollene Speed McIntyre. “The City’s façade improvement funds enabled us to go further than we would have with improvements and we’re looking forward to the change.”

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The Office of Economic Development currently supports six community-based organizations to provide grants for commercial building façade improvements in the following neighborhoods: Broadway (Capitol Hill), Central Area, Chinatown/International District, Little Saigon, Pioneer Square, Southeast Seattle (Rainier Valley & Beacon Hill), and the University District.

Funds may be used for exterior façade improvements, awnings, painting, signage and other improvements which will significantly enhance the appearance of the exterior of properties. No match is required for project costs up to \$10,000, and a dollar for dollar match is required for project costs from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Interested Southeast Seattle businesses may apply for façade improvement funds by contacting Michelle Jones at SouthEast Effective Development, the community-based organization that administers the façade program in Southeast Seattle, at 206-760-4276 or mjones@seedseattle.org.

“We’ve seen an increase in the number of applications for the façade improvement program this year, and we certainly hope more businesses will take advantage of these funds moving forward,” said Earl Richardson, Executive Director, SouthEast Effective Development. “Physical improvements to a storefront can do a lot to increase foot traffic and sales and improve the look of a community.”

For a full list of façade improvement program neighborhoods and contact information for the administering agencies, visit the City’s Office of Economic Development’s website at www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment.

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